

The Towell Years

Shortly after I. T. Bode submitted his resignation as director, the Conservation Commission offered the post to Thomas Kimball, director of the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Kimball had an excellent record as a wildlife administrator from his former position as director of the Arizona department before assuming his post in Colorado in 1952. He was interested in the Commission's offer because of the reputation Missouri had established under Bode. Its constitutional base and relative freedom from partisan politics were attractive to Kimball. And Bode had established an environment where there was stability for a professional to administer a good wildlife program.

Kimball came to Missouri to look over the situation, bringing his wife and a son. After visiting the state, he reluctantly declined to accept the directorship. The son, who suffered from an asthmatic condition, became ill while they were in Jefferson City and a physician told Kimball that he thought the Missouri Valley might be an unhealthy place for the boy. Another reason was that Kimball was a devout Mormon and the Jefferson City area had few who followed that faith. Kimball wanted to rear his six children in a religious atmosphere and he felt that was unlikely for a Mormon in the mid-Missouri area.

Kimball returned to Colorado, leaving there in 1960 to become executive director of the National Wildlife Federation, a post he held for twenty-one years.

After Thomas Kimball's refusal, the Commission advertised nationally for applicants for the director's job. It received a great many applications and interviewed eleven men, none of whom was selected.¹ Instead, they finally settled on William E. Towell, who had been serving as acting director.



William E. Towell became the Department's second director in 1957. A native of St. James, Towell's achievements included streamlining the Department's administration and locating all sections and divisions under one roof for the first time.

Towell was born and raised in St. James, Missouri, attended Drury College in Springfield and the University of Missouri, then took both his bachelor's and master's degrees in forestry from the University of Michigan in 1938. That year the Department was setting up its forestry program and Towell applied

¹ Those interviewed were: Gen. W. M. Hoge, Lexington; A. B. (Bud) Jackson, Springfield; Earl I. Long, Wappapello; August P. Beilmann, Gray Summit; Hugh Denney (former wildlife biologist), Ellington; Charles Callison (former information officer), Washington, D. C.; Harold V. Terrill, (first wildlife biologist hired by the Department), Jefferson City; John S. Stevens, St. Louis; Curtis S. Allin, Melrose, MA.; James R. Loeffler, Picayune, MS.; and John Clark, Montrose, CO.

for the post of state forester. He was interviewed by Commissioner A. P. Greensfelder, who thought Towell was much too young and inexperienced. But when George O. White became state forester, Towell was one of the first four foresters he hired, assigning him to the Meramec Forest Fire Protection District at Sullivan.

When the federal Norris-Doxey Act helped fund farm forestry positions in 1941, Towell became the second Department farm forester, assigned to Kirksville. He held that post for nine months, then was brought into Jefferson City by White to help with administration as a senior forester.

In that position he also wrote and published manuals for farm foresters and fire district operations. During World War II he and fellow forester Arthur B. Meyer served as photo-interpreters in Naval Intelligence. After the war Towell and Meyer were promoted to assistant state foresters, with Towell assigned to forest fire protection and nursery operations.

When Jay B. Morrow died in 1956, Towell was selected by Bode as assistant to the director. One of his major roles was chairman of the regulations committee and it was in that capacity that Towell felt most keenly his lack of background in wildlife management.

He studied everything he could about wildlife and consulted the Fish and Game Division staff. He got along well with Fish and Game Division Chief Melvin O. Steen, before Steen left to become director of the Nebraska Game, Fish and Parks Department. Towell said he practically memorized Durward Allen's book on wildlife, *Our Wildlife Legacy*, and later made it required reading for new employees.

Towell had been assistant to the director about six months before Bode retired, and served as acting director another six months. He had not considered himself a candidate for Bode's job at first, but as matters dragged on and he received some encouragement from Commissioner Ben Cash, he presented to the Commission a thirty-six-point program that he felt might help the Department and offered himself as a candidate.

After Kimball declined to accept the job,



Dan Saults, left, and Towell in 1957 when Saults was serving as assistant director under Towell. Saults became well known for his eloquent editorials in the Conservationist, before leaving the Department to work with BLM in Washington, D.C.

there was some dissension within the Commission. It consulted Ira Gabrielson of the Wildlife Management Institute, who advised selecting a director from within the staff. Mel Steen offered to return from Nebraska to take the post and initially he was supported by Joe M. Roberts and Ben Cash. Later, Joe Roberts championed Information Officer Dan Saults for the job, possibly feeling some kinship because of the newspaper publishing background of both men. When Towell presented his program, the Commission accepted it, but Roberts insisted that Dan Saults be promoted to assistant director. Towell became director and Saults assistant director on May 1, 1957.

In a salute (and perhaps a slap at Bode) the House of Representatives passed a resolution hailing their appointments as natives of Missouri. That harked back to the troubles

Bode had in 1937, as a non-native of the state.

Towell and Sauls made a good team. Towell brought a good sense of organization to his job out of his background in the Forestry Division. George O. White had been a good administrator, modeling his program on that of the U. S. Forest Service. A lot of emphasis was placed not only on doing a good job, but also on appearance. Forestry headquarters were models of neatness and field personnel wore uniforms.

One of Towell's ambitions was to get all Department field men into uniforms, particularly the conservation agents. The old olive drab and dark blue agent's uniform never was popular and men seldom wore it unless specifically ordered to do so on special occasions. It took several years of experimentation with various types of uniforms before one was found that met the needs of the agents and was generally acceptable to them. However, there was a lot of resistance to wearing any uniform at all, initially.

Other employees felt the subtle pressure of appearances, too, (Towell was a natty dresser) and it wasn't long before employees began wearing ties and jackets to work in the Central Office. In the old un-airconditioned Monroe Building dress had been quite casual.

Towell initiated weekly staff conferences so that each unit could be kept aware of what other units were doing, and problems could be discussed and solutions mutually sought.

Both Towell and Sauls had a strong belief in public relations, and getting conservation agents into marked cars and uniforms was part of their program. Both believed it was more important for wildlife violations to be prevented, by making agents highly visible, than the number of arrests they might make. They accomplished uniforming agents, but marked cars came later.

Another goal of Towell's was to improve the status of the conservation agent, by upgrading the requirements and lengthening the training period. Over the years this was accomplished. Central Missouri State University led other universities in offering college credit for agent's training.



Agent Thomas Wright models the first conservation agent uniform. Impractical for field work, it hung in the closet more than it was worn.

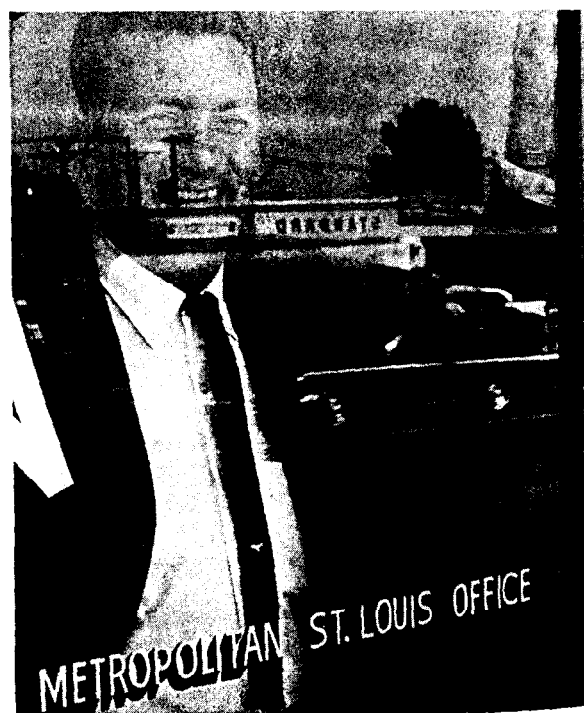
In 1957, Dan Sauls recommended to Towell that Department offices in the metropolitan areas of St. Louis and Kansas City would be a service to the public in those areas, and sub-offices were approved in Oc-

tober. Two Field Service agents, Herbert S. Schwartz in St. Louis and Richard H. Rotsch in Kansas City, were assigned to manage them. The officers served as information sources for the media and public, and also handled permit sales.

Saults was especially good as chairman of the regulations committee. Working with Werner O. Nagel, he sought to simplify the *Wildlife Code*, to make regulations simpler and easier to understand. He enunciated the committee's philosophy as to approach regulations with this in mind: that we should permit as much public use of wildlife resources as is consistent with the state of such resources, by species; that we should avoid harassment of the hunter and fisherman wherever possible; that (to paraphrase Jefferson) that regulation is best which regulates least. In essence, we feel it is best to keep seasons as long as possible, and to be first restrictive on methods, next on limits and to approach shortened seasons as a last resort. This is in line with our policy that the pursuit is more important than the take.

It was in the area of regulations that Towell first began to have difficulties with the Conservation Federation which eventually led to a serious break between the two organizations. According to Towell, Jay Morrow had always consulted first with the Federation on regulations changes. Towell believed that the Federation, during Bode's tenure, had been too closely tied in with regulations and administration. He felt that was not in the best interests of the Department and was determined to assert its independence from what he considered undue Federation domination. There were a number of years when the Federation officers and the Department were at odds, though this eventually was overcome.

It was Commissioner Ted Butler who first voiced the growing rift between the Department and the Federation. He had been president of the Federation when he was appointed by Gov. James T. Blair to replace Joe M. Roberts, effective February, 1958. Roberts term had expired in July, 1957, but the Governor had not named a replacement and Roberts continued to serve an additional six



Metro service coordinators Richard Rotsch, left, Kansas City and Herbert Schwartz, right, St. Louis, both assumed their duties in the new metro offices in 1966 after serving as conservation agents and Field Service agents.



Ted Butler was president of the Conservation Federation when he was appointed commissioner in 1958. He was concerned at the rift at that time between the Federation and the Commission.

months.

Butler resigned his position as Federation president so as to avoid any conflict of interest, but he retained close ties with the group. He had been affiliated with the Federation since its founding, having stumped the state to secure passage of Amendment 4, and having served as its first full-time executive secretary for six years.

At the August, 1961 meeting, Butler told the Commission that the Conservation Federation was dissatisfied with both the Department and Commission and suggested inviting the Federation officers to a September conference to discuss matters. The Federation officers could not attend a meeting at that time. There was a temporary impasse between the two groups—the Federation wanted a meeting without the presence of Towell, Sauls or its own director, Ed Stegner, and the Commission wanted all parties present.

A meeting was eventually held on February 25, 1962, at the Governor Hotel in Jeffer-

son City. Towell, Sauls and Stegner were not present. Besides the Commission and its secretary, Helen Cooper, the Federation was represented by its president, Dale Bevard, and six others.²

The meeting was cordial, with both sides presenting their views. The Federation indicated that under the present Department administration it was not being given the consideration that had existed under the previous administration. The Commission indicated that it was concerned about appearing to be dictated to by the Federation. Both groups finally concluded that the root of the problem probably was personal friction between Towell and Stegner, rather than any real differences between the Federation and the Commission. Director Towell was instructed to keep the Federation posted on Commission matters and to work as closely as possible with the organization. The March issue of the *Conservationist* carried an article on the Federation as the Commission's strong right arm.

That seemed to settle matters for a brief time, broken only by a flare-up in July. That month the Department had published a special edition of the *Conservationist* celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Department and dealing with its history. Robert A. Brown, former commissioner and long-time board chairman of the Federation, wrote a highly critical letter because the Federation was not more highly publicized in that magazine.

Brown wrote, I thought the meeting [Feb. 25th] was productive and that some very fine results would follow. It seems to me that it comes with very poor grace for the Commission in effect to slap its staunchest supporter in the face, particularly when we all were trying to establish better relations on both sides.

The Commission was much upset by Brown's letter, bitterly opposed to it, as Chairman Ben Cash put it. Director Bill Towell was more conciliatory in his reply to Brown, stating that the Silver Anniversary issue was intended as a chronology of the Conservation Commission, not a history of the con-

* Included were Vice-President Roland M. Hoerr, Carl Morrow, David Crossen, John I. Rollings, Ted Scott and Federation secretary, Virginia Snodgrass.

servation movement. No slight was intended, and it is my hope that this incident will not be magnified further beyond its real importance. That seemed to cool matters, at least between the Commission and the Federation.

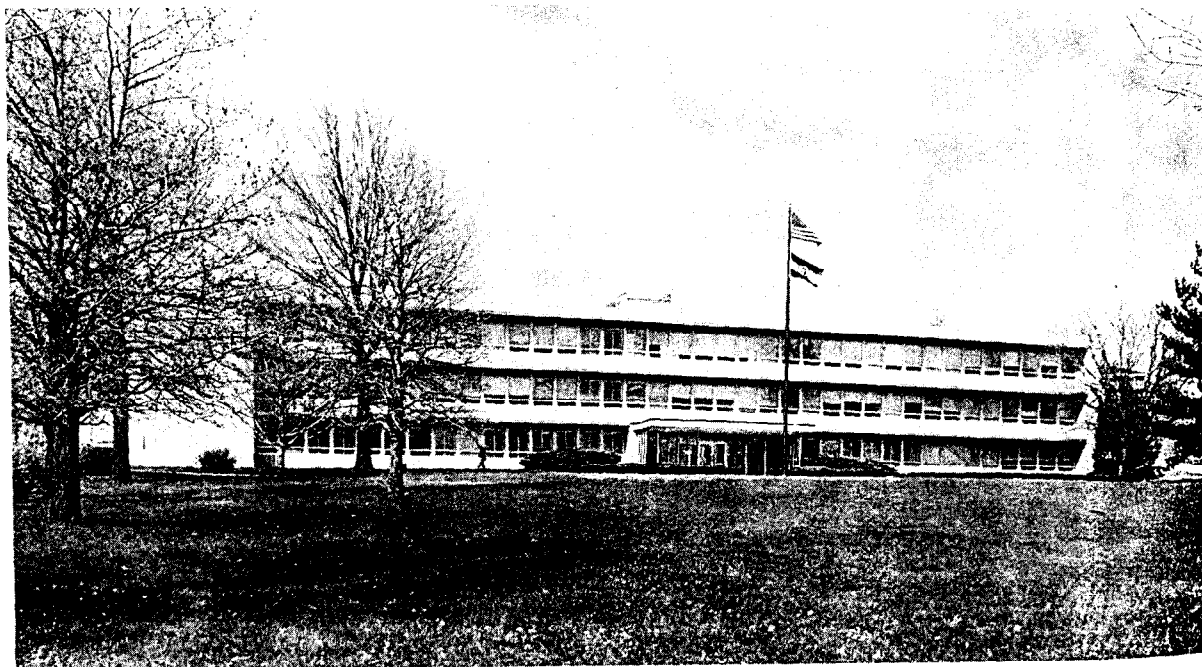
There was a later flare-up between Stegner and the Commission in the 1960s over Corps of Engineers policies with respect to acquiring lands for construction of Truman Dam. The Federation took a hard-line position that the Corps should take title to all lands, while the Commission was more flexible and at least partially supported the Corps policy of acquiring title to certain lands but flood easements on other lands. That is an oversimplification of an extremely complicated situation, but the matter caused hard feelings on both sides when it was being considered. The passage of time eventually settled that issue.

One of Towell's goals outlined to the Commission was to unite the Department. There were inequities in the salary structure and decision-making was splintered. This was aggravated by the staff being located in three

different buildings in downtown Jefferson City, and the research group being located in two different offices in Columbia. Towell felt that the research staff would be more valuable if located in Jefferson City, but was opposed in this by many of the staff. He gave up trying to move them from Columbia, where they had available researchers and libraries of the University to help in their work. Instead, he began to concentrate on getting the Jefferson City staff under one roof.

In May, 1958, he succeeded in getting the Commission to assent to a two-year lease for offices in the much more modern Farm Bureau Building, then located on Missouri Boulevard. It was a three-story office building and the entire Department moved into the second floor in July. In January, 1962, the Commission rented additional space on the first floor. The Department remained in the Farm Bureau Building until August, 1965.

The Department had been turned down for office space in the Jefferson Building when it was built in the early 1950s. The Department's property on State Street in Jefferson



The former Farm Bureau Building was the first home-away-from-home for the Department, which occupied the second floor and part of the first floor for seven years before moving into headquarters on North Ten Mile Drive (Truman Blvd.) in August, 1965.

City became obsolete as a possible building site and was finally sold in February, 1961. Towell then tried to get a building site west of the Capitol on state-owned property, but was turned down by the legislature. In July, 1961, the Commission assented to acquiring forty-two acres on North Ten Mile Drive (now Truman Boulevard) as a future headquarters site, with the proviso that half of it be offered to the Highway Commission. That body also was seeking a new building site, but declined the Commission's offer.

The Commission was split on beginning construction of a headquarters building on the North Ten Mile site, with Pippin and

Burch urging construction and Cash and Butler opposed. The Federation, too, opposed construction, saying that the legislature had been opposed to it and there was no point in needlessly arousing its ire. Governor John Dalton supported the construction, though various members of the legislature opposed it.

It wasn't until June, 1963, that the Commission finally accepted a budget for the next fiscal year that included funding for building construction. The next month a contract was signed with the St. Louis architectural firm of Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum for building design. Reserve funds that had been



The headquarters complex as it appeared in 1968 included the original five modules, training building, shop and garage.



Governor Warren Hearnes addresses the crowd at the dedication of the new Department headquarters October 1, 1965. Three different construction efforts added a training building in 1968, a 26,000-square-foot addition in 1980, and more storage buildings and a shop in 1985.

squirreled away were to be used for construction, with an additional \$750,000 from federal accelerated public works funds.

The six-building complex was completed and the Department moved into it in August, 1965. One of Towell's major objectives had been met: the Department, with the exception of the research staff, was under one roof. The official dedication and open house was held October 1, 1965, and even former Director I. T. Bode came to take part in the festivities.

A training building was constructed in 1968. A growing Department rather quickly needed more space and another office building was completed in 1971. The Department had a chance to add to its holdings in later years and bought two adjacent parcels that increased the headquarters site to about 160 acres.

In 1980, a 26,000 square foot addition was completed, with erection of yet another two-story office building plus semi-underground offices, as an energy saving technique. Additional shops and storage buildings were completed in 1985.

Paul Q. Tulenko, a trained landscape architect, designed the grounds and plantings. Most of the area, which had been a pasture when purchased, was planted to native Missouri trees and shrubs. Five small ponds, each demonstrating different water control structures, were constructed. Garden clubs and individuals took an interest in the plantings and donated some of them. The office complex and grounds quickly became a showplace for Jefferson City and nature trails and guided tours were offered.

It is believed that this site was the location of a pheasant game farm near the turn of the century, under the old Fish and Game Department.

Towell embarked on a series of moves to correct administrative problems with some reorganization of the Department. Because of inconsistencies in salaries, training and recruitment, he created a Personnel Section to oversee these functions. Ray M. Wells, who had begun his career with the Department as a conservation agent in 1944, was promoted to a post of personnel officer, July 1, 1958. Wells had been a Field Service agent from

1946 to 1955, when he became chief of the Field Service Section.

At the same time, Towell abolished the Information and Education Division, assigning its division chief, Kenneth R. Hicks, to chief of the Field Service Section and assigning the Education Section to the Field Division, which also contained the Field Service and Protection sections. The Information Section, headed by James F. Keefe since the previous August, was assigned to the director's staff.

In the Fish and Game Division, Charles R. Ted Shanks was named superintendent of game, replacing Paul Q. Tulenko, who became federal aid coordinator.

Tulenko first joined the Department in 1940 as a draftsman in the Federal Aid Section. He rose to become state project leader in 1943, and Game chief in 1946. Ted Shanks had been a wildlife biologist specializing in waterfowl management since 1947.

In January, 1964, Towell needed some-

one to work with the U. S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in developing a state outdoor recreation plan. He chose Edwin H. Glaser, transferred from his Forestry Division post. Glaser had been with the Forestry Division since 1950, but left for two years to teach forestry at Mississippi State University. He returned in 1956 as a farm forester and was transferred to the Central Office in 1959 in charge of fire control, and later supervised state forests and nurseries.

In 1964, following the resignation of Dan Sauls as assistant director,³ Towell undertook another sweeping change in Department organization. He created two assistant director posts, with Larry R. Gale promoted to assistant director-line, and P. G. Barnickol, assistant director-staff.

Paul G. Barnickol had joined the Department as an aquatic biologist in 1939. He left for a time, then rejoined and became chief research biologist in 1948, and superintendent

3 Sauls, after serving as assistant director for almost seven years and almost exactly seventeen years after he joined the Department, resigned to accept a position with the Bureau of Land Management in Washington, D. C. He later held a similar post with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He retired to the Branson area in 1973, where he did free-lance writing and served in many volunteer conservation posts until his death September 23, 1985.



Future Farmers of America who accomplish conservation projects are annually treated to a tour by the St. Louis United Sportsmen's League. Accompanying this group from the mid-1960s were Field Service agents Kenneth Hicks, extreme left; J. Lewis Berry, third from left; Otis Thorburn, fourth from left; and Leonard Rowe, extreme right.



Director William Towell with assistant directors Paul G. Barnickol and Larry R. Gale in a 1965 photograph taken shortly after the Department moved into its new headquarters.

of fisheries in 1959. He replaced Dr. George B. Herndon, who retired after twenty-six years as fisheries chief, dating back to the old Fish and Game Department in 1933. Gale, of course, had been chief of the Fish and Game Division since 1957.

The Fish and Game Division was split into a Game Division, headed by Ted Shanks, and a Fisheries Division, headed by Charles A. Purkett Jr., who replaced Barnickol.

Chuck Purkett, a native of Montana, had first come to the Department as a fisheries biologist in 1950, one of those hired in anticipation of passage of the Dingell-Johnson Act. He won international attention as the first biologist to unravel the riddle of paddle-

fish reproduction, and became assistant superintendent of fisheries in 1962.

In a move to further increase efficiency, Towell created an Operations Section from the construction and maintenance force headed by Robert F. Wells in the Forestry Division. This section, plus the Engineering Section, which was detached from the old Fish and Game Division, was assigned to Assistant Director-Staff Barnickol, along with the Information, Federal Aid, Personnel, Fiscal and Planning sections.

The Planning Section, composed of Ed Glaser and Carl R. Noren, was a new one. It combined the liaison functions of both men. Noren was continuing work he had done.



Biologist Charles A. Purkett unraveled the mystery of paddlefish spawning and enabled the Department to maintain a fishery after Truman Dam cut off access to spawning grounds in the Osage River.

since May, 1948, when Director I. T. Bode had assigned him to keep an eye on river basin developments and to do liaison work between the Department and various federal agencies, principally the U. S. Corps of Engineers. The new two-man unit was headed by Glaser.

Larry R. Gale, as assistant director-line, supervised the Field Activities Division, now composed of the Education Section, Field Service Section and Protection Section; and the Game, Fisheries and Forestry divisions.

Another of Towell's goals had been to mend relations with the governor and legislature. Bode had shunned both insofar as he could, and the result had been suspicion and mistrust on all sides. Towell recognized that there were times when the Department needed the support of both the governor and the legislature and set about establishing a friendlier basis, without ceding any of the Commission's constitutional integrity.

He ordered the governor's name to be placed on the masthead of the Department's monthly magazine, as a courtesy. This immediately drew a scathing rebuke from former

Director I. T. Bode, in retirement in California, claiming Towell was knuckling under to the politicians. Nevertheless, Towell began to do some lobbying with the governor's office and the legislature in an attempt to acquaint both with the needs and aspirations of the Department.

Relations were fairly good with Governor James T. Blair, even more so with Governor John M. Dalton. Governor Warren E. Hearnes, according to Towell, never did philosophically accept the Conservation Commission's autonomy and was more difficult to deal with.



Carl Noren was assigned by I. T. Bode to monitor river basin development. Under Towell, he assisted Ed Glaser in the newly created Planning Section.

Hearnes made several attempts to exert control over the Commission that drew strong opposition, and these incidents did not endear either the Commission or **Towell**, personally, to **Hearnes**.⁴

Relations with the legislature during the period blew hot and cold. There were some legislators friendly to conservation, and as a group the legislature turned back every attempt to intrude into the Commission's autonomy. Not that there were not some stormy sessions, when various bills to do away with the Commission or reduce its powers were introduced. Usually, the watchdog of the Conservation Federation of Missouri, Executive Director Ed Stegner, would lobby against the bills and summon letters and personal calls from Federation members. These were enough to turn back such legislation.

One major problem with the legislature arose in 1966, when that body attached a proviso on the Commission budget that forbade the Commission to give any salary increases. The comptroller refused to honor salary raises the Commission authorized on the grounds that it was contrary to legislative intent. This was immediately appealed to the attorney general for a ruling. It was one which he apparently was loath to make because it wasn't until the following December that he issued a ruling. The attorney general ruled that the Conservation Commission was not directly under the control of the governor and thus the comptroller did not have the authority to disapprove requests for expenditures by such departments not directly under the governor's control, except when the expenditure is not within the purpose of the appropriation or when there are not sufficient funds in the appropriation to pay for such expenditure.

Towell also had problems with the State Park Board, again due to personality conflicts. Parks Director Joseph Jaeger Jr. had worked under Towell as a forester and there had been differences between the two men before Jaeger left the Conservation Department to

accept the Parks post.⁵ Time and again small differences between the two agencies would erupt into full-blown problems. Conditions improved somewhat between the two agencies when Lee C. Fine became Parks director, and Towell always regretted that the two agencies did not get along better during his administration.

One last major aim of **Towell's** was to embark on a public lands acquisition program. George O. White had been strong on public lands acquisition, dating from his experience with the U. S. Forest Service. Bode generally opposed the Department owning land. As an example, what was known as the **6,000-acre Adair Tract** (now Huzzah Wildlife Area) had come on the market for \$10,000 and White had urged Bode to buy it. Bode refused. The Department later bought the tract from Col. Joseph Plassmeyer at a price of \$42,000, which was considered a bargain at the time.

White had quietly gone about picking up forest lands at tax sale prices and built a modest state forest system between the national forest's holdings. He was helped in this by Robert Brown, a realtor in **Rolla**. Brown would pick up tax sale lands and sell them to the Department for fifty-cents to a dollar an acre. Towell believed that money invested in recreational lands was an investment in the future. The later ***Design for Conservation*** echoed this in 1971, with its goal of 300,000 acres of additional public recreation land.

Towell hoped for a Department fishing lake in every county and public hunting areas scattered throughout the state. He launched the stream access program, begun in July, 1958, with a donation from Ross E. Stones of St. Louis of two and one-half acres on the Big Piney River. A number of land purchases were made under **Towell's** administration, but it remained for a later director to actually carry out a large-scale acquisition program.

Other major events took place during **Towell's** tenure as director. An intensive trout fishery was begun at the James Foundation's

⁴ It was claimed that Towell had publicly allied himself with Hilary Bush in the 1963 campaign for the Democratic nomination for governor, and Hearnes never forgot that. A newspaper published a picture of Towell and Bush hunting at Swan Lake.

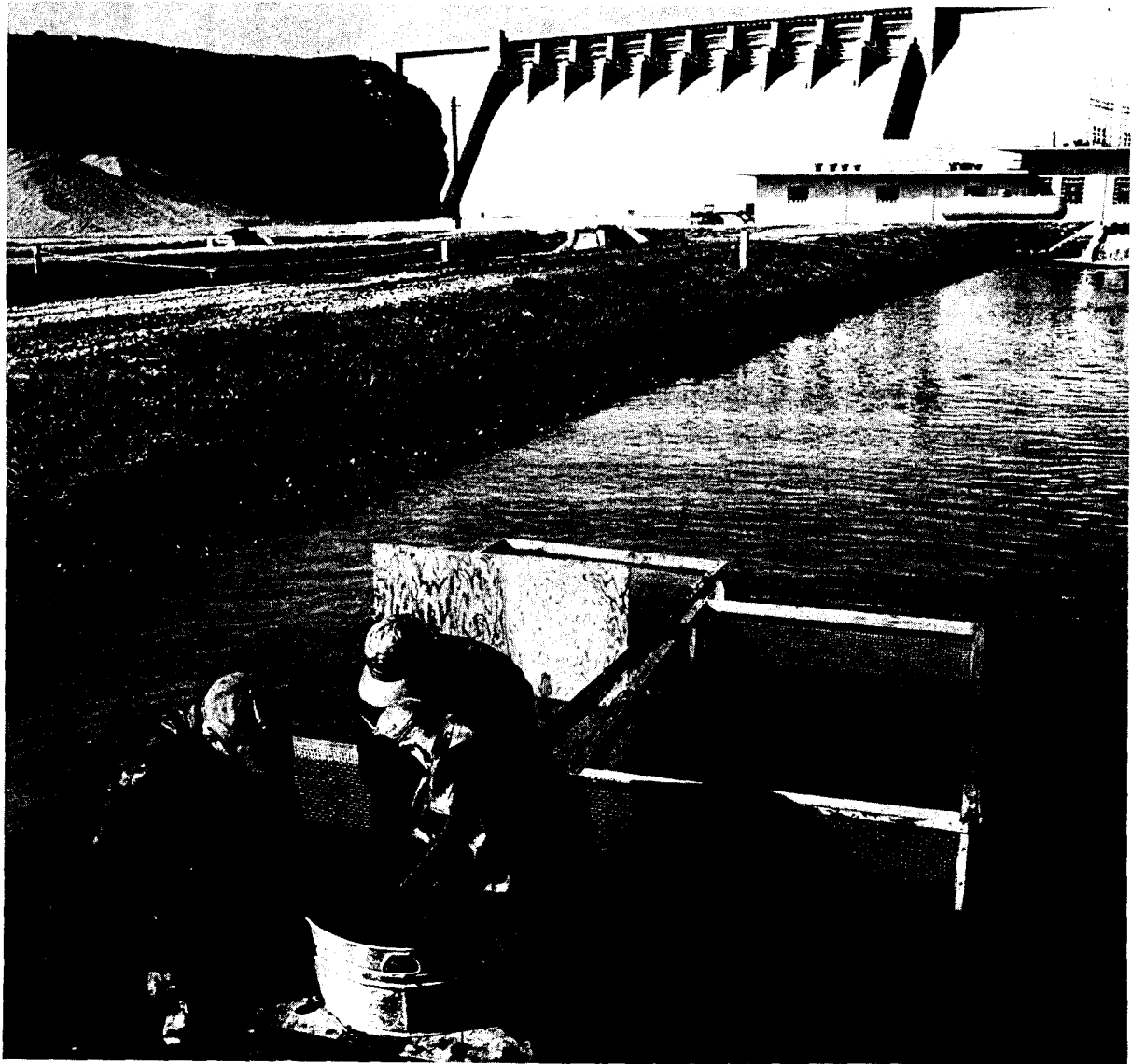
⁵ Towell claimed Jaeger was angered when Towell opposed him for fire control chief, and Osal B. Capps was selected instead.

Maramec Spring in 1957. The employees came under the State Retirement System, to the relief of Conservation Agent L. N. Elson (71), Supervisor Joe Green (73), Attorney Lon Haymes (70) and Janitor Josh LaRue (75).

The federal Uniform Pleasure Boating Act brought regulation to that activity in 1958, and it was assumed the Commission would be the administrator. But the same constitu-

tional provisions that insulate the Commission from political manipulation prevented it from taking on boating regulation, and the Division of Water Safety was created. Many believe that the Department of Conservation should have been charged with this.

In 1959 the new Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery began operations. That same year the first statewide deer season was held, marking the beginning of a new era. In De-



Fisheries personnel check on the spawning condition of trout below Table Rock Dam in 1959, the year Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery went into operation.



Werner O. Nagel began his career with the Department as a biologist in charge of quail and partridge stocking programs. He kindled many conservation fires in the Department and throughout the state. He co-authored the first Missouri game survey, and wrote Conservation Contrasts and the best-selling Cy Littlebee's Guide to Cooking Fish and Game.

ember, a joint publishing venture with the University of Missouri Press brought out *The Wild Mammals of Missouri* by Charles and Elizabeth Schwartz. At the same time the Department's all-time best seller, Cy *Littlebee's Guide to Cooking Fish and Game* by Werner O. Nagel was introduced.

In 1959, a proposed Ozark National Scenic Riverways to preserve the Current and Jacks Fork rivers occupied the Commission's attention. It wrote Senator Thomas F. Eagleton that it supported the Riverways concept in *principle* and would cooperate in its establishment, requesting that forestry practices, hunting and fishing be made a part of it. The ONSR came into being when President

Lyndon Johnson signed Public Law 88-492 in August, 1964, but land acquisition did not begin until 1966.

In 1960 Missouri's first hunting season on wild turkeys in modern times heralded the comeback of that king of game birds. A late winter snow storm reduced small game numbers to the lowest ever recorded, and there was a considerable die-off of pond fish.⁶ Emergency feeding programs were established and set the pattern for future years. A three-day archery deer season was held in Knob Noster State Park, the first such ever conducted. In 1961, for the first time a hunter could take two deer in a single year, one by gun and one by archery methods.

⁶ At Jefferson City, forty-four inches of snow fell between February 20 and March 20, 1960.

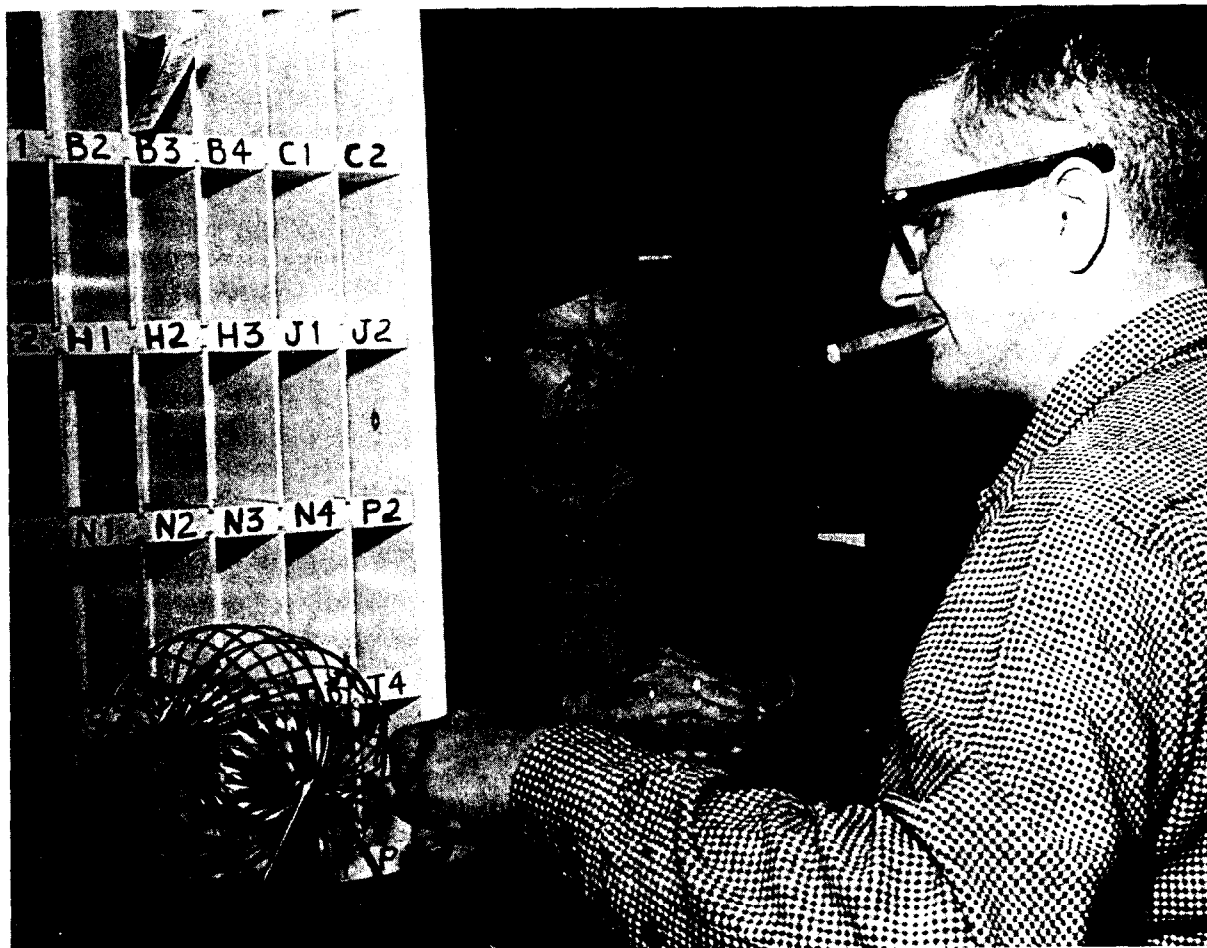
In 1962, two new Protection regions were formed: North Central and Central, bringing the total to nine regions. The Department celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in July, 1962, with a special observance for all former commissioners and employees at the State Fair. In that year all hawks-even the Cooper s and sharp-shinned-were brought under protection, and the bobcat was protected by being placed on the sport list.

In 1963, drought conditions caused concern about hunting activities adding to forest fire worries and the Commission dusted off

the old Every Sportsman a Fire Fighter campaign once more.

In 1964, the Commission okayed selling an easement on Schell-Osage Wildlife Area to the Department of Defense for a missile site. Director Towell proposed differentiating between the Department and the Commission by creating a Department of Conservation to indicate the staff. But legal blocks prevented this and it wasn't until reorganization of state government in 1974 that this came about.⁷

In 1965 the first ten-shell limit was im-



Swan Lake Area Manager Fred "Brownie" Veach draws a numbered ball that will tell the hunter which goose pit he will hunt from. This was an early morning ritual at all Department waterfowl hunting areas.

⁷ The attorney general ruled that because Gov. Donnelly had put the Conservation Commission, State Park Board and the Moses Austin Memorial Commission into a State Department of Conservation in June, 1946, the Conservation Commission was legally a part of that department and could not create its own.

posed at Swan Lake Public Hunting Area in an attempt to stop sky busting. In 1966 the Department took over management of Thomas Hill Lake and adjacent lands, and discontinued distribution of multiflora rose, which was coming under increasing fire from the agriculture community for spreading to pastures.

That same year the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service voiced concern that the Department had no minority employees, especially blacks, and Towell ordered every effort be made to employ minorities.

There were a number of personnel changes within the Department during the Towell years. In April, 1959, Dr. G. B. Herndon retired and Paul G. Barnickol was promoted to chief of fisheries. Biologist John Funk replaced Barnickol as superintendent of fisheries research. In July, Floyd C. Larsen replaced Chief Engineer J. Warren Smith, who resigned, District Forester Osal B. Capps became state forester when George O. White retired after twenty-one years of service, January 1, 1960. To honor Missouri's first state forester the Commission renamed its nursery the George O. White State Forest Nursery.

In 1961, Lee C. Fine was promoted to assistant state forester, as was John E. Wylie. In December, 1961, Dr. Forrest Olin Capps resigned as superintendent of, Education to take a post with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Clarence E. Billings was named his successor in March, 1962.

In August, 1962, Biologist Harold V. Terrill became the first employee of the Conservation Commission to reach the twenty-five-year mark. In 1963, Montie Glover retired as Fiscal Section chief after thirty years in that post, four of them with the old Fish and Game Department, to be replaced by Vernon E. Sievert. Floyd C. Larsen retired and Charles E. Hooker was named chief engineer. He had joined the Department in 1960, and been promoted to assistant chief in 1962. Director William E. Towell reached the twenty-five-year milestone in 1963.⁸

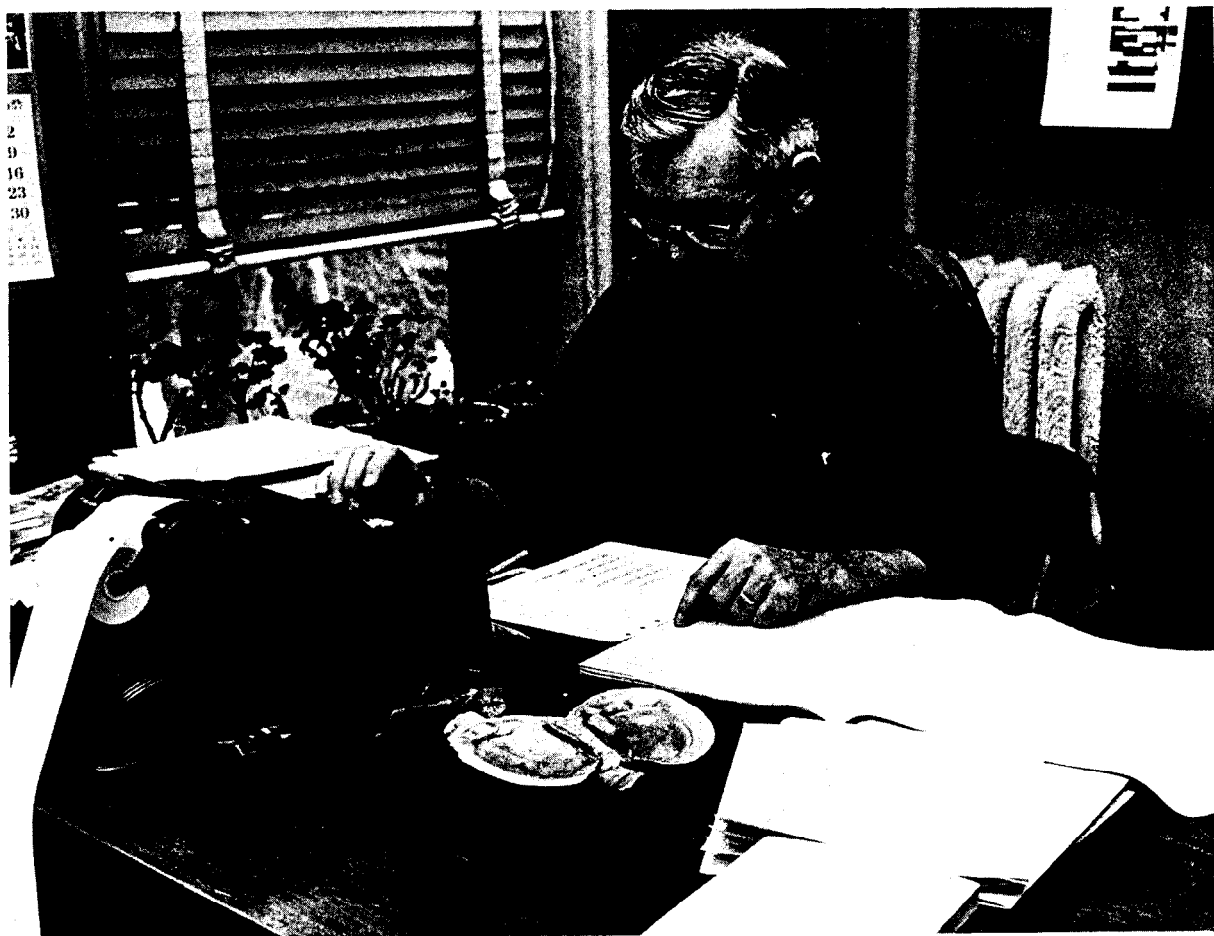
⁸ Others reaching twenty-five years of service in 1963 were Field Service Agent J. Lewis Berrey, Field Service Chief Kenneth R. Hicks, Biologist A. Reed Twichell, Chief Clerk H. Reed Frisbie, Mail Room Supervisor Francis J. Mertens, Agent Roy N. Tomlinson and Hatchery Supervisor Robert H. Price.



Dr. G. B. Herndon, a dentist by training, retired in 1959 after a career that began with the old Fish and Game Department. He was retained by Bode to guide the Department's early fisheries program.

In February, 1965, Kerwin F. Hafner was named assistant state forester replacing Lee C. Fine, who resigned to become director of state parks. In July, Allen Brohn and Reed Twichell were assigned federal aid coordinator responsibilities, replacing Paul Q. Tulenko, who became the Department's first landscape architect. This was a pre-retirement position for him. That same month Forester David D. Hurlbut was promoted to the post of assistant operations officer. Julian H. O'Malley became the Department's first full-time attorney with the retirement of Aubrey R. Hammett.⁹

In 1966, Department employees were invited to join a union of state employees. The Commission voted that they were welcome to do so, however no Department em-



John L. Slim Funk, long-time superintendent of Fisheries Research, developed many of the programs of investigation upon which fishing regulations were to be based.

ployees chose to join. In July of that year, Werner O. Nagel was assigned the task of bringing his 1934-37 epic study of Missouri game and furbearers up to date. This resulted in the book *Conservation Contrasts*, published in 1970.

The Conservation Commission during the Towell years started with Ben Cash, Kennett auto dealer, Joe M. Roberts, Gallatin newspaper publisher and owner of some telephone companies, Frank P. Briggs, Macon newspaper publisher, and Dru L. Pippin, Waynesville

resort owner.

Roberts' term expired in June, 1957, but he continued to serve until Ted Butler was appointed in January, 1958.

Butler's appointment was hailed by conservationists because of his long service as a volunteer and former executive director of the Conservation Federation. But his term was troubled because he was often at odds with his fellow Commissioners and the Department staff over quail and smallmouth bass stocking, which he favored.

⁹ Twenty-five-year service awards in 1965 went to Refuge Manager Lyman J. Chronister, Agent Arthur A. Jack Frost, Biologist Charles W. Schwartz and Forestry Aide Alton P. Robinson. Twenty-five-year service awards in 1966 went to: Protection Section Agent Chief James L. Bailey, Education Advisor Dorris W. Frazier, Field Service Agent Paul B. Johnson, Education Advisor A. R. Mottesheard, Agent Supervisor Hugh F. Pritchard, Superintendent of Wildlife Research Bill T. Crawford, Assistant Game Division Chief Dunbar Robb, and Refuge Manager Ray Woodring.

Frank Briggs was reappointed by Gov. Blair in June, 1959, but Dru Pippin was replaced by Ewart H. Burch, a Maryville banker.

Burch was an ardent quail hunter and came onto the Commission with the avowed purpose of getting the Department to again stock quail. But after a few months he became convinced of the futility of stocking and publicly withdrew his support for it. He became a staunch supporter of getting the Department staff into its own building.

Ben Cash was reappointed for a second term by Gov. Dalton, in 1961.

In February, 1961, Frank P. Briggs was offered the post of under-secretary for fish and wildlife in the U. S. Department of the Interior and Dru L. Pippin was reappointed by Governor John Dalton to fill the vacancy. Pippin resigned on September 24, 1964, ending fifteen years and eight months Commission service—the longest term served by any commissioner.

Pippin was replaced by August A. Busch Jr. of St. Louis, who served out the ten months remaining of the Briggs/Pippin term.

William R. Tweedie, Jefferson City footwear manufacturer, replaced Ted Butler in August, 1963. Both he and Busch were Dalton appointments.

In July, 1965, Gov. Warren E. Hearnes named Robert G. DeLaney, Charleston farmer, and Jim Tom Blair, St. Louis insurance executive, to replace Ewart Burch and August A. Busch Jr., respectively. Blair, DeLaney, Tweedie and Cash were the Conservation Commission when Towell submitted his resignation, effective January 1, 1967, after ten years as director and twenty-eight years with the Department.

He cited several reasons for leaving. Most of the things he had set out to do had been accomplished. At age fifty it was likely to be the last time he could make a career change.

It also was true that he was increasingly at odds with Gov. Hearnes, but he said he felt insulated from anything Hearnes could do so long as he had the support of the Com-



Bill Towell had a distinguished tenure as director from 1957-1967, welding the Department both administratively and physically. He went on to become chief executive of the American Forestry Association in Washington, D.C.

mission.¹⁰

Towell said one time, After about ten years a director has had to say No! to enough people that little reservoirs of resentment are built up. This destroys a man's effectiveness and it's time for him to move on.

There were a number of job offers—as director in several states or positions with the federal government. Then he was offered the job of chief executive with the American Forestry Association in Washington, D.C. If I had tailored a job myself, he declared, I couldn't have designed a better one. I knew it was time to go.

Reflecting on his ten years as director, Towell asked: What am I least proud of? Probably the alienation of the Federation and my inability to work well with the state parks directors. Instead of improving relations, I'm afraid I got us further apart.

¹⁰ Both Blair and DeLaney said that at this time Towell no longer had their support, though they probably were not aware that he had been approached to run against Hearnes in the Democratic primary. Towell said he had no interest in a political career.

He said he was proudest of welding the Department together administratively, of getting it together in its own headquarters, of simplifying regulations and emphasizing the

acquisition of public lands for recreation, while never, at any time, yielding on the Commission's constitutional authority.